

#### ABSTRACT

An electronic programming guide (EPG) system employs a preference engine and processing system that learns viewers' television watching preferences by monitoring their viewing patterns. The system operates transparently to build a profile of a viewer's tastes. The profile is used to provide services, for example, recommending or automatically recording television programs the viewer might be interested in watching. To permit the personalization of the preferences database, a user interface is provided to allow the user to simulate various kinds of interaction with the system. This allows the system to build a profile rapidly without requiring a long interaction history to personalize the system.

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